

Heartbeat by MistressYin

Series: [Just A Word \[1\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M

Language: English

Characters: Byers Family (Stranger Things), Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Harrington Family - Character, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathon Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler, Maxine "Max" Mayfield/Lucas Sinclair, Past Steve Harrington/Nancy Wheeler - Relationship

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-11-02

Updated: 2018-11-02

Packaged: 2022-04-23 02:55:14

Rating: Not Rated

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 3,114

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Steve Harrington had always been a complicated person with an uncomplicated goal in life.

Survive until he was eighteen and get the hell out of this house.

Heartbeat

Author's Note:

Hi Steve Harrington fans! Me and my sister (LadyYang) both decided to attempt a one-word writing prompt for our favorite characters in Stranger Things, who we found don't have many fanfiction stories written about them out there. I hope you enjoy this series, my goal here is to update one new one-shot to it every day for the entire month, so we'll see how it goes.

The word of the day is....Heartbeat

He could feel his heartbeat pounding in his ears. The rhythmic thrum of fear biting away at his sanity, his blood flowing faster, his chest throbbing, his blood rising to the back of his throat, and the root of it all was his heartbeat.

He was six the first time he recognized this was fear in a physical form.

His father had come home, angry, beyond that, and drunk. His mother had told him to run. He had, running, running, running, on pure adrenaline. Down the stairs, into the small, side laundry room, and behind the machines, tangling his limbs in the cords and holding his breath even as his lungs longed for air and his head span.

He could hear it, the heartbeat.

It drowned out the screaming and slurs, it drowned out the hurt that filled him when the next day his mother didn't even look at him, it drowned out the way his father was slumped on the couch dead beat and tired with a can of beer on the mini table beside him.

After that, his mother grew distant, she learned it was better to just leave the house than deal with his dad. She learned that it was better him than her.

Soon he was seven and had felt fear in its physical form more times than he'd ever planned to.

His mother was away, maybe in Las Angeles or Vegas, she left too much for him to keep count.

Today though, today was much, much worse than the days he would have bruises easy to hide from prying teachers and worried strangers.

Today, his father had a alcohol bottle clenched tightly in his hand, and was stumbling dangerously close to his mother's glass pantry that held all of her meaningless collectables. His foot caught the rug and he sailed down, the cabinet swaying with a loud creak and crunching and shattering on the floor.

The next thing he recognized was pain, and blood.

His father was passed out his foot lodged under the cabinet. His chest ached from the weight of the wood above him and he knew his leg was wrong because it hurt and it was sore in a way that couldn't be right.

Glass pierced his cheek, and his arms and legs.

His father wasn't getting back up. "Dad?"

He tried but to no avail, and this time the fast heartbeat was both fearful and dangerous because his blood flowed faster and was gathering at all of his cuts and old injuries reopened which wasn't good it wasn't he had to stop being afraid—

He couldn't and his panic increased his heart rate increased and everything else slowed.

He heard an echo of a scream, feminine and high pitch.

Steve was taken to the hospital after that, twelve stitches and a lot of salve. The nurses demanded an explanation and his mother said she didn't know and he claimed older kids—bullies—and his father was in lots of trouble because alcohol could be tested apparently but money could do lots and he got off the hook with a strict warning and jail time threats.

He was rambling, wasn't he?

The next time fear stuck true was when he was twelve, older and more cautious, able to dodge provoking his father with ease and apologies always ready on his tongue.

His mother found painkillers to be a blessing and drowned herself just like the heartbeat would drown the screaming in them even though you weren't supposed to drive while disoriented in such ways.

Likewise, this proved a problem when she took him to a school game on a Thursday night, and she wasn't able to see the cars turn signal before it smashed into the left of them.

He could hear a loud scraping, and registered blearily that his head had smashed into the chair in front of him.

His heartbeat was the only thing real, not the hands grabbing him and the fire licking at his skin.

He was twelve and he learned the hard way it was safer just to ride his (shiny, new, spoiled) bike to school because neither of his parents were ever sober enough so it was worth the risk of robbers and kidnappers and bad people.

Age fourteen the first time he fought back. After that, it wasn't beatings anymore I was fights raw with anger and ended with him either bloody or his knocking his father unconscious.

Steve was now fifteen, black and blue face (from provoking other students, they whispered) and pain in his back but he could find a numbness in the realization his mom and dad were right about the alcohol and drugs. They made it all go away and he could feel no guilt in being like them as long as he always had a bottle with him.

(Falling to the floor, pill bottle in hand as the glass bottle smashed against the floor completely empty—)

Sixteen and he was driving for the first time, wind in his hair and freer than ever before. Driving was an escape, it seemed, just like his mother had always said. He thought maybe he heart was beating fast in a way that wasn't bad, but couldn't be sure.

Steve, was sure at seventeen, though, when for the first time hearing his heartbeat didn't mean fear or end in pain. (With the possible exception of driving)

It started with Nancy Wheeler, simple girl who looked sweet, happy family, normal family, and a prude friends who'd never do anything fun, it seemed.

She was soft and sweet and he invited her to his house, (Mistake) with two other people he hung around for the reason of having no one else.

Her friend, Barb, disappeared that night. Gone.

And he had a feeling she didn't run away.

She had told and that was okay even if it was a reason for his father's ire and his mother's absence because that was just fine.

But Nancy was still soft but quieter and more determined, hanging around this other guy now, Jonathon Byers who's brother was gone and he could tell.

The way she looked at him?

She cared.

How could he stand between that?

He told her he was sorry, she apologized for telling, and he responded with a shrug. (My dad's a grade a asshole) and is never not so why should it matter to him or her the details?

He was seventeen and he was getting the shit kicked out of him. Slammed into the floor with a burst of pain, blood sliding down his lips now, ooh, that one was a black eye for sure—

The cops saved him for the first time, so it was a new experience. His father didn't care. His mother was gone.

Because he was sorry and his friends shouldn't of done that, (His fault, it was his fault anyway), he cleaned the theater and drove to

her house intentions pure and a planned out apology on a scrap piece of notebook paper concealed in his pocket.

She had a long, slit like cut on her hand.

“Did he do this to you?”

“You have to leave, now!”

Then he was shoving his way into the room and he was right, Byers was there but had an identical cut on his hand and a baseball bat in the other one.

A gun sat on the table.

“What the fuck is going on here?”

Then Nancy had grabbed the gun and wasn't that scary so he left but they scam and he was used to scary fucked up shit with his heartbeat pounding in his ears he had rushed and thrown open the door.

He remembered clearly what happened next.

The ‘Demogorgan’ came. And it all went to shit.

The ended up finding the Byer's kids brother and all was well with the spooky shit aside he was going to move on, (He hadn't had a drink in a while, it wasn't Nancy's style) and forget, forget, forget like always but.

But. There was always a but, right?

Nancy hated the lying he was so used to, wanted to tell Barbs parents the truth and was so distracted he could easily sneak bruises and scars past her.

She got drunk and called him out.

“It's bullshit, it's all...it's all bullshit!”

And yea that stung, but it was to be expected when she ran off with

Byers again. Cheated on him.

He was a damn well good babysitter, though.

(Nancy made the heartbeat good, but she was happier with Jonathon and there would be others, he had to keep telling himself that she wasn't the only good one out there)

But the kids were good, they were and he laughed with them and the Dustin guy really loved that "demodog" or whatever and all was well.

His heartbeat was at normal speed, there was new, freaky girl who could lift things with her mind that was there all along (apparently) and a red haired girl that reopened way too many scars for him to handle with her jackass brother.

He was used to the bruises and concussions anyway.

(Goddamn plate)

So they lit shit on fire and now he was here.

Picking up the little craps from school and bringing them to the arcade.

Like a fucking babysitter. But he liked kids so it was fine except that they asked annoying question about his life and questioned his excuses way too much.

(Heartbeat)

"Come on Steve! Let's go!!" Steve grinned as he pulled on his seatbelt, informing the kids to do the same.

"Alright, alright, hold your horses, do we have everyone? Even the girls?"

"Yes!!! Now come onnn lets goo!" Max whined, leaning forwards so he could see her face in the rearview mirror.

Max tilted her head curiously. "Where did you get that bruise, on your arm?"

The handprint was peeking out of his white long sleeves. He shoved it down, ignoring the way it inched back up his arm insistently.

“From shit, kid, now stop pestering me.”

She glared at him, crossing her arms. “Was it Billy?”

He rolled his eyes. “What does ‘stop’ mean to you?”

Dustin raised his hand. “I like to take it as a suggestion.”

Steve stopped hovering his foot over the gas and turned around to glare at the brats, pointed his finger at Dustin.

“I didn’t ask you.”

“Well, now that I’ve heard his intelligent answer I’ll have to go with it as well.” Max beamed.

He growled under his breath and turned back around in his seat, revving the engine.

“You didn’t answer.” Jane (or Eleven, he wasn’t sure) piped up, studying him curiously. He pulled his sleeve down further.

“So, kid?”

She snapped her head back.

His sleeve, as if pulled by an invisible force shoved itself up his arm to reveal the flurry of handprints and bruises that littered his skin, discolored and yellow. Small cuts began bleeding at being yanked the way they were, the ones scabbing over itching under his skin.

His heartbeat faster in fear.

“Holy shit, dude, what happened to your arm?” Dustin asked, horrified.

“Man, you need to lay off that arm, it looks like it kills!” Lucas seemed slightly annoyed.

“What happened?” Will asked from beside him in the shotgun seat,

looking saddened.

Steve glared, shifting uncomfortably with the intention of rolling back down his sleeve but was stopped by a warning look from Jane.

“I just got into a fight with my dad, its fine.”

It was the very, very wrong thing to say. Dustin had jumped up only stopped from flinging himself at him by the seatbelt holding him in place. “Your dad did that to you? What the fuck, dude?”

“You say that like its casual!”

He groaned, slamming his head down on the steering wheel. “It’s not normal, just not a big deal. He was drunk, its fine. I’m fine. Now are you going to stop harassing me so I can actually drive you shits to you arcade or what?”

He could go for a drink right about now. The kids, however, were determined.

“Screw the arcade! You can’t brush something like this off, ok? Its its —“ Mike floundered, waving his hands around.

“What, abuse? I’m nearly eighteen and faced a demogorgan, kid, I can handle a drunk father.” He rolled his eyes.

“Then why didn’t you want to tell us?!” Dustin snapped, staring at him heatedly.

Steve paused, before he regained his bearings. “I didn’t want to worry you.”

“That would imply there was something to be worried about.” It was Max who spoke up, and for whatever reason her claim hit home. He flinched back from them and closed his eyes.

“I can handle it.”

“That doesn’t mean you should have to.”

Steve slammed the gas and drove.

The car ride was silent the rest of the way. The only other thing that happened was Mike silently passing him a walkie talkie, staring at him straight on.

“Just in case.”

He hadn't expected to need it, honestly, he hadn't.

But turns out, the shits told their parents who called his mother to check in. His mother's loyalty was with dear dad. His mother told them he was probably just 'embarrassed about bullies' or some shit. He wondered if they believed. She seemed pretty damn convincing.

He groaned a loudly as the bottle smashed on his head, vision blurring.

The walkie talkie was just in his bag, up and on the polished marble countertop, it wouldn't take much to just reach over and...

A boot slammed into his ribs.

He coughed, tasting metallic thickness and knowing something had broken.

When the next bottle crashed on his side, this time full and the alcohol stinging his every wound, he knew his father wasn't going to stop.

Not that he cared, but the kids would feel guilty. So would Mrs. Byers and the cop guy and maybe Nancy too.

They definitely didn't need that on their conscious after all the shit with Bob and...

Ugh.

His chest hurt. His heart was pounding.

He could hear it in his ears.

Steve kicked his father legs hard, reaching onto the counter and grabbing his bag, the disoriented drunken man stumbling for longer

than normal he grabbed the walkie talkie.

“Hey kidddo? I’ll, I’ll take you up on that offer of assistance now...w-what did he say? Right yea, code red or w-whatever...” he managed to choke out while clicking the buttons, praying to god that he had done it right having never practiced before. He slid off the counter, limping on his hurt leg.

His father slammed his head into the cabinets. Hard.

The last thing he heard was the walkie talkie coming on and a loud cry of—“STEVE?!” he wasn’t sure who from.

He felt his lip smash into the edge of the marble, and was out cold.

(Heartbeat)

He heard the beeping of a familiar heart monitor. His heart was beating irregularly fast, but nothing dangerous. He laughed dryly.

He heard a choke from somewhere next to him, and registered Nancy rushing up to him. Across the room where she was previously, Byers stood up with a stretch, eyes scanning him.

“God, Steve! Don’t ever scare me like—god, that’s cliché—I can’t believe...your mom said!” she let out a confused shriek, shaking her head back and forth.

He smirked at her. “Jeeze, Nancy, I’m fine...what...what happened to mom and dad?”

Her gaze turned startlingly cold. “Your mom’s safe, and Mr. Harrington? Oh well, nothing less than he deserved. He’s going to be locked up for a long, long, long—“

“Steve!!!” Dustin raced into the room, clambering around his bed, followed by Jane looking suprsingly uncomfortable (Hospital) and the rest of the crew.

“You’ve been unconscious for three days! They said you had grade two concussion which means severe and that it was left untreated for a whole week and that you needed rest so it was okay and they

wern't sure if—“

He chuckled, patting Lucas on the head. “Slow down, buddy. I just woke up.”

He let out a strangled sound waving his arms around as if willing himself not to continue.

“I got your call. Hopper said that you weren't fine. You said you were fine.” Jane cut in, tone surprisingly accusing.

Her eyes softened. “You get off the hook because bad stuff happened to you, though.” She nodded to herself as if confirming this.

“I was fine!” he protested. Across the room, Byers hummed in a way that made it sound more like a growl.

“So what, I've been out for three days and your all still here?”

“Well duh!” Will snapped, rolling his eyes. “We'd miss school for anything.”

Max nodded. “No really, we would.”

His heart raced.

Then Hop' walked in the room, stance intimidating and determination on his face. “Alright, everything not in the hospital bed, out, I've got some questions for the kid.”

Steve's heart dropped, but Dustin and Nancy both hopped onto the bed, which made him look to the cop hopefully.

Amusement mixed with sympathy broke onto his face. He shoved his thumb toward the door. “Out.”

They obeyed, sending him one last apologetic look.

“So kid, want to tell me why my kid had to explain to me that your dad left big bruises on your arm and Will told his brother about it so that's why you called us at about, mhm, say, 3 o clock in the morning sounding like you got run over by a fucking bus?” the tone was light,

the cop raising his eyebrows in open invitation for him to talk.

He let out a sigh. “Not really.”

“The people are asking for an explanation. They want to know if Mrs. Harrington ever got involved, how long this was going on, and of course, his drinking habits.”

Steve folded himself under his white hospital sheets.

“You are aware this is the first time you’ve been awake and coherent, right? You’ve woken the nurses up on and off, mumbling and freaking all of those kiddos out. They want to help you, especially the red head one Jane doesn’t like.”

He snorted, and rubbed his eyes harshly with the side of his wrist.

So he talked. He talked about his mom and explained his dad and tried desperately to ignore the ache that was clinging to him everywhere or the memories of his father’s furious face.

Soon enough, he was exhausted to the bone and the officer was pulling a sheet over his body.

“Get some sleep, kid. You’ve had one hell of a week.”

Author's Note:

Thank you for reading, I hope you enjoyed! This story is mainly just a set up for all the upcoming stories, more of a summary than anything else. the other stories will be both before and after this, in a much different writing style.

Thank again, from MistressYin!